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Tell me your stories.

Overnight Shift

Vol #1; iss #5



this is the family issue! (little me. ↑)

8pm Sept 24th - 8am Sept 25th

Hi There...

My name's Vanessa. I work at a domestic violence shelter. I work overnights on the weekends - hence the name of the zine - and I started making this zine to take up time. See, I don't have any particular task at work; I'm just here to do stuff for the residents and make sure the house doesn't burn down. So every two weeks I compile all my thoughts and experiences from the last two weeks and crap them all out here where everyone can see.

I've been getting kind of stuck in a rut, though, always talking about stupid love shit. This time I'm going to talk about family, both mine and otherwise.

①

My Other Family

On top of my genetic relatives, I've got a huge extended family of friends, lovers, ex-lovers, and comrades that support me. I exist within an enormous web of community. These folks include my roommate, the folks I do revolutionary work with every day, the friends I've made in other cities who I can only see a few times a year, and people I haven't seen for a long time but to whom I owe some calls. I want to have kids and live on a huge farm out in the country with everyone I love and be a huge hippy. I want to find a partner with whom I can spend the rest of my life. I always want to be surrounded by the wonderful, amazing friends I have. If you love me; thanks.

My sister and I had a really antagonistic relationship when we were young. We never got along until my dad died and my mom remarried. He was an abusive alcoholic and my sister and I kind of teamed up to defend ourselves from him. I felt bad when I moved out because I kind of left her to fend for herself. She was always more social and popular than me, and is skinnier and prettier than I am, and he started calling her a slut and saying that she was going to get pregnant when she was in 8th grade. She ended up dropping out of high school, getting her GED, and moving out before she turned 18. She recently started cosmetology school and is working full time. She's still really pretty. I don't know her very well anymore because I haven't lived at home for 5 years now, but we still try to keep in touch. We get updates about one another from my mom.

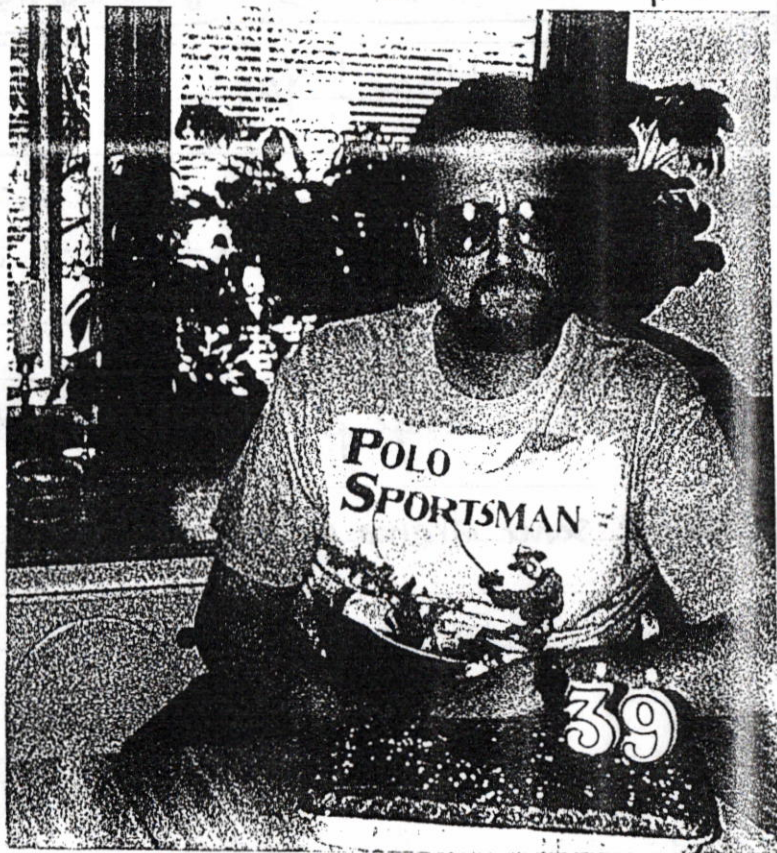
⑨

In the last 2 weeks...

- I played the Village! Yay!
- I watched the first episode of Trans Generation, a Sundance Channel series about transkids in college.
- I started a new, huge photography project.
- I started some drama on the internet.
- I listened to SO MUCH BRIGHT EYES.
- I made a new friend.
- I applied my advocate training to my own life and to a situation outside of work, and realized how important my job really is.
- I stayed up all night for fun!
- I ate icecream for dinner + for breakfast - on separate days.

②

My Dad



Gary Eugene Flays

March 4, 1953 - Nov. 16 1995

photo ca. 1993

My Little Sister



As you can see from this photo,
my little sister isn't so little.
She's 5 years younger than
me, which makes her 18 now.
She's in cosmetology school
and living with a friend and
her boyfriend, alternatingly.

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It's been really interesting to see my relationship with my mom change over the years. We're very close and I love her a huge amount. As I've gotten politically active, we've begun to behave more as friends than mother and daughter. We have political debates in which we agree about the basic premise (because we're both leftists) but disagree on the cause or approach (because she's a Democrat and I'm an anarchist). I've become fully independent now that I've graduated college and she's not sure what that means about our relationship. I'm trying to find a way to really tell her how important she's been to me and how much I care about her, but it's hard to find the words. Probably, the first step is to call her back.

I was in 8th grade when my dad died. I was just barely 14 years old. He died in November after a brief illness. The previous July he was fishing and cut his leg pretty badly. He was suffering liver failure from Hepatitis C that he contracted from a prison tattoo. He didn't know he had Hep C or that his liver was on the verge of shutting down. He got a massive infection in the cut and had to be hospitalized. He had to go to the hospital a lot pretty quickly. He started getting terrible muscle cramps all the time. Finally, he went to the KU Med Center for a liver transplant. My grandma stayed with me + my little sister. When my mom showed up at the house with her sister whom she hadn't spoken to in years, I knew he had died. She couldn't talk. All she did was cry and sleep, and her mom and best friend took care of my sister and me. I went to school the next day and everyone was weirdly nice to me. It made me pretty uncomfortable; it was just so fake.

These are a bunch of facts about my dad, but they don't really say much about him. It doesn't say in there that I went fishing with him before the sun came up in the summertime. It doesn't say that our song was "The Joker" and that for the longest time I thought it was a song he made up. It doesn't say that I'm straight edge because he was a drug counselor. It doesn't say that I got his eyes and hands and temper. It doesn't say how fucking much I loved him and how I never got to say goodbye because we thought he'd live through the liver transplant. It doesn't say he died from Hep C he got in prison. It doesn't say nearly enough. (5)

Saturday, November 18, 1995

Deaths

Gary E. Hays, 42, of 2411 Colorado, died Nov. 16, 1995, at the University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kan.

He was born March 4, 1953, at Wichita, the son of Marion and Maxine Holliday Hays. A Hutchinson resident since 1987, formerly of Salina, he was assistant manager of Rusty's Outdoor Sports. Hutchinson was a senior certified alcohol and drug counselor and worked as a chemical dependency professional for 13 years. On March 24, 1979, he married Phyllis Cleveland at Garnett. She survives.

Other survivors include two daughters, Vanessa Hays and Briana Hays, both of the home; mother, Wichita; and a sister, Sharon Taylor, Wichita.

Funeral will be at 11 a.m. Monday at Johnson & Sons Mortuary, Hutchinson, with Richard Foster and Allen Holloppe presiding. Friends may call from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday, and the family will receive friends from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Sunday, both at the funeral home. Burial will be in Memorial Park Cemetery, Hutchinson.

Memorials may be sent to the Dillon Nature Center, Hutchinson, in care of the funeral home.



My Mom



My mom is my number one influence. She's the strongest, bravest, most outrageous woman I know. She taught me how to demand what I want, to expect nothing but the best, and to hope for everything. She's a social worker and she taught me to care about people. She's tough as hell and she doesn't give a shit. She loves to dance to blues and bluegrass. (6)